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LETTER DATED 7 OCTOBER 1983 FROM THE REPRESENTATIVES OF ANGOLA, CAPE VERDE, GUINEA-BISSAU, MOZAMBIQUE AND SAO TOME AND PRINCIPE ADDRESSED TO THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

We, the representatives of the People's Republic of Angola, the Republic of Cape Verde, the Republic of Guinea-Bissau, the People's Republic of Mozambique and the Democratic Republic of Sao Tome and Principe, have the honour to forward herewith upon instructions of our respective Governments, a letter from Mr. José Luis Guterres, member of the Central Committee of the Frente Revolucionária de Timor-Leste Independente (FRETILIN), addressed to H.E. the Secretary-General and to the President of the Security Council.

In this regard we would highly appreciate that this letter be circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Elisio de FIGUEIREDO
Permanent Representative of Angola to the United Nations

(Signed) Amaro Alexandre da LUZ
Permanent Representative of Cape Verde to the United Nations

(Signed) Inacio SEMEDO, Jr.
Permanent Representative of Guinea-Bissau to the United Nations

(Signed) Manuel DOS SANTOS
Permanent Representative of Mozambique to the United Nations

(Signed) Adriano CASSANDRA
Chargé d'Affaires of the Permanent Mission of Sao Tome and Principe to the United Nations

Annex

Letter dated 7 October 1983 from Mr. Jose Luís Guterres addressed to the President of the Security Council

I have been entrusted by H.E. José Alexandre Gusmão, National Political Commissar of the Frente Revolucionária de Timor Leste Independente (FRETILIN) and Commander-in-Chief of the Forças Armadas de Libertação Nacional de Timor Leste (FALINTIL), to transmit to the members of the Security Council and to all Member States of the United Nations information concerning the grave situation now prevailing in East Timor.

1. A major Indonesian military offensive is now under way against the people of East Timor. This offensive, codenamed "Operasi Sapu Bershi" ("Operation Clean-up"), began at the end of August. It involves 20,000 troops from the Indonesian "Rapid Deployment Forces" (PGT), the Mobile Brigade (BRIMOB) and Commando units. This force is supported by French-made "Allouette" and "Puma" helicopters, American-made OV-10 "Bronco" jets, tanks and armoured cars.

2. The operation was ordered by President Suharto and is under direct leadership of the Indonesian Armed Forces Chief, Gen. Benny Murdani.

3. The strategy of the Indonesian generals is to cut off the territory of East Timor in three areas, thus preventing the various FRETILIN military units and commanding posts from co-ordinating their defences and counter-offensive and to capture the FALINTIL Commander-in-Chief, José Alexandre Gusmão.

4. The Indonesian Armed Forces Chief, Gen. Benny Murdani, best revealed his Army brutal intentions when he boasted publicly that there would be "no mercy" for those resisting Indonesian rule. (the New York Times, 1 September 1983; Agence France Press, 1 September, dateline Jakarta).

5. The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) has been forced out of the main island since July this year. ICRC maintains only a small presence in the off-shore island of Ataúro. In forcing the ICRC to leave the territory, the aim of the Indonesian military authorities is to prevent any independent eyewitness from denouncing their brutal war of aggression and to prevent the wounded and the prisoners of war from receiving any humanitarian assistance that might save their lives. It is clear that the intention of the Indonesian military authorities is to exterminate the people of East Timor because this would be the only way they can succeed in breaking-up the nationalist resistance. (ICRC Situation Report No. 10, September 1983).

6. A report from Church sources in East Timor notes the massacre of 200 East Timorese villagers in "retaliation" for the death of 15 Indonesian soldiers killed by East Timorese prisoners in an Indonesian military camp. (This information is contained in a letter addressed to President Reagan, initiated by Hon. Tony P. Hall, Member of Congress, dated 27 September 1983).

7. The report referred to above was circulated by the Australian Associated Press (AAP), dateline Jakarta, and published in extenso in the Canberra Times of 19 August 1983. The reported incident did take place. More than 30 East Timorese

farmers who were working in forced labour in the Viqueque district attacked their Indonesian guards, killing or wounding most of them and escaped with the captured weapons and ammunition.

8. It is now being alledged by certain Indonesian and Australian officials that the current Indonesian military offensive was "provoked" by this incident.

9. "Operasi Sapu Bershi" has been under consideration since early this year even as a de facto cease-fire was in effect between the Indonesian forces and the FRETILIN Army. This cease-fire was agreed upon between the top Indonesian Military Commander in East Timor, Col. Purwanto, and the FRETILIN President, José Alexandre Gusmão, following bilateral talks held on 20 and 21 March this year in FRETILIN-held areas in East Timor.

10. The talks were held at the request of the Indonesian side and were welcome by the FRETILIN leaders. They were held in an atmosphere of warmth and hope. The talks raised hopes that peace could be attained. During the talks, the FRETILIN leader stressed to Col. Purwanto that the United Nations Secretary-General must be informed and be invited to participate in future talks since he has been mandated by the General Assembly to initiate consultations with all parties directly concerned.

11. However, the Indonesian military authorities failed to inform the Secretary-General of the talks and the cease-fire agreed upon by both sides.

12. The six-months old cease-fire has now been broken. The situation in East Timor is very grave at present. The Revolutionary Council of National Resistance and the Central Committee of FRETILIN draw the attention of the Security Council to this new Indonesian military aggression and call upon the Council to take immediate steps provided for in the Charter.

13. It must be recalled that Security Council resolutions 384 (1975) and 389 (1976), calling upon the Government of Indonesia to withdraw all its forces from East Timor "without delay", have not been complied with by Indonesia.

14. The FRETILIN leadership commends the Secretary-General for his efforts in the search for a solution to the problem of East Timor. FRETILIN welcomes any peace initiative that adheres to the sacred principles of self-determination and independence as embodied in the Charter and in resolution 1514 (XV) and in the Declaration on the Principles of International Law and Friendly Relations Among States. The parties to the conflict are the East Timorese, represented solely by FRETILIN, and Indonesia. The FRETILIN leadership is available for consultations with the Secretary-General and the Representatives of the Government of Indonesia as well as with the Government of Portugal.

15. The Revolutionary Council of National Resistance will maintain the Security Council informed about the developments in East Timor as it deems necessary.

(Signed) José Luís Guterres
Member of the Central Committee of FRETILIN